

PURCHASE OF PAINTING ENTITLED "PEACE"

JANUARY 29, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. LUCE, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 4848]

Walter L. Dean's painting known as "Peace," which has long hung in the room of the Committee on Naval Affairs, was lent to the Government more than 25 years ago by the artist, who was one of the best known and most highly regarded marine painters of his time. Mr. Dean died some years ago and his two daughters are willing to sell the picture to the Government.

This painting represents the squadron of evolution, better known as the "White Squadron," as constituted in 1891, lying peacefully at anchor in the harbor of Boston. This squadron was the nucleus of the present Navy. The *Chicago* as originally constructed was bark rigged, and is in the foreground of the painting. The *Boston* and *Atlanta* are represented as brig rigged, while the *Newark* is bark rigged and the *Yorktown* schooner rigged. These vessels were afterwards reconstructed to meet newer requirements, so that their original identity has actually been lost. "Peace" shows them as originally constructed, and is the means of keeping in view the type of ship that started the Navy of to-day.

The painting is on a canvas 9 feet long by 6 feet 3 inches high. Wherever it was exhibited before being placed in the room of the Committee on Naval Affairs it occupied the place of honor, was warmly commended, and received many awards.

When consulted in the matter by your Committee on the Library, the House Committee on Naval Affairs passed the following resolution:

Whereas the picture of the White Squadron known as "Peace," which was painted by the late Walter L. Dean more than 30 years ago, and which has hung in the Naval Affairs Committee room for the past 25 years, presents a detailed study of the type of vessels which were the nucleus of our modern fleet, and is a picture of unique historic interest; and

Whereas in presenting the fleet with sails furled lying at anchor in the sunlight it symbolizes that ideal of peace with assurance of adequate protection, which is our country's aim; and

Whereas it is a work of art of unquestionably high value;

Resolved, That the Committee on Naval Affairs petitions the Congress to authorize the purchase of this picture, and expresses the hope that it may remain on the walls of the committee room which it has adorned for so many years.

The Commission of Fine Arts, when asked to give its judgment, reported that the picture is well painted and a price fair to the owners and to the Government would be about \$5,000.

Your committee feels that some consideration may fairly be given to the fact that for a quarter of a century this picture has hung upon the walls of the committee rooms of Congress, and that those who have used or visited this room have enjoyed the work of the artist without any compensation to him or to those whom he has left behind. Furthermore, we do not think it would be just to continue this enjoyment without compensation and we are of the belief that in all fairness and equity we should either buy the picture or cause it to be returned to the owners. Its removal would be thought by many to be the loss of a real adornment of one of our public buildings.

For these reasons the committee recommends the authorization of an appropriation for the purchase of the painting at the price suggested by the Commission of Fine Arts, viz, \$5,000, and that the resolution be passed with the following amendment:

In lines 9 and 10 strike out "\$15,000; said amount is hereby appropriated," and insert the following: "\$5,000; which sum is hereby authorized to be appropriated."